

# Texas Today *Foundations*

## Unit 8: Civil War

Name:

Date:

Period:

### Part I: Emancipation and the Legacy of Juneteenth

Although the Civil War was more than 150 years ago, many people today still **celebrate the day that the enslaved people in Texas learned of their freedom**. Abraham Lincoln had issued the **Emancipation Proclamation** more than two years earlier in 1863, **but** people in the rebelling Southern states, like Texas, had not freed their slaves.

When Confederate General Robert E. Lee surrendered to Union General Ulysses S. Grant at the Appomattox Court House in Virginia on April 9, 1865, the rest of the Confederacy quickly collapsed. Two months later, **Union troops arrived at Galveston, Texas, to officially announce and enforce the emancipation of Black Texans.**

The announcement was called **General Order Number 3**, and it was delivered by U.S. Major General Gordon Granger. Read the order below and answer the questions that follow.

General Orders No. 3

Headquarters District of Texas  
Galveston, Tex. June 19, 1865

The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, **all slaves are free**. This involves an **absolute equality** of personal rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves, and the connection heretofore existing between them becomes that between employer and hired labor. The freedmen are advised to **remain quietly at their present homes and work for wages**. They are informed that they will **not** be allowed to **collect at military posts** and that they will not be supported in **idleness** either there or elsewhere.

By Order of Major-General Granger.

F. W. Emery  
Major and Assistant Adjutant General

- A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, 1896.  
Texas State Library and Archives Commission.

1. What was the purpose of General Order Number 3?
  - a. To inform people in the South that enslaved people were free, had equal rights, and should be paid for their labor.
  - b. To punish the former Confederates who had rebelled against the Union by freeing the enslaved people.
  - c. To collapse the Southern economy by removing the majority of the work force for Southern plantations which grew cotton.
  - d. ~~To display the political and military power of the Northern states to the Southern states that had recently been in rebellion.~~
  
2. What did the order encourage the freed people to do? Choose **THREE**.
  - a. Not try to vote, because it would probably be unsafe for them
  - b. Keep working at their old plantations.
  - c. Not ask for too much money in their new jobs.
  - d. Receive pay for their work.
  - e. Not gather at forts or just hang around doing nothing.
  
3. Why do you think General Order Number 3 included these suggestions?

I think General Order Number 3 included these suggestions in order to **(A)** cause the Confederacy to surrender and end the Civil War **(B)** make sure Black Texans were free and their rights were recognized by White Texans. **(C)** punish the Southern Confederates for rebelling against the U.S. government. **(D)** cause problems for the Texas economy by removing the majority of its labor force.

## Part II: Juneteenth Today

General Order Number 3 **freed approximately 250,000 Black Texans from slavery** on June 19, 1865. In the years that followed, Black Texans and advocates of equality held **celebrations** on the **anniversary** of the announcement of General Order Number 3.

Some of the first celebrations included **political rallies** and **educational events** to **teach the freed people** about their **rights** as American citizens.

In 1865, the United States government created an organization called the **Freedmen's Bureau** to provide services like **education, legal assistance, family reunification** and **medical care** to the newly freed people. The Freedmen's Bureau in Texas organized the first Juneteenth celebration at the state capital in Austin in 1867.

Over time, Juneteenth celebrations have come to include **public entertainment, music, picnics, and family reunions**. Some communities across Texas organized **Emancipation Committees** and saved money to **buy land** on which to hold their celebrations, often calling the land they purchased "**Emancipation Park**."

In 1979, more than a century after the Civil War ended, the Texas legislature accepted a bill declaring Juneteenth **a state holiday**. Then in the 1980s, a **Fort Worth educator** named **Opal Lee** began a quest to get Juneteenth **recognized as a national holiday**.

Forty years later, Lee's dream was realized. In 2021, President Joseph Biden signed a law **establishing Juneteenth as a national holiday**. Opal Lee was present at the signing of the bill.

1. What was the significance of General Order Number 3 in Texas?
  - a. It officially announced freedom for Black Texans.
  - b. It set requirements for Confederates to rejoin the Union.
  - c. It declared a new economic system for the South.
2. What did many of the first celebrations of Juneteenth include?
  - a. Barbecues and fireworks
  - b. Political education events
  - c. Protests of discrimination
3. What was the Freedmen's Bureau?
  - a. An organization that provided services to newly freed people.
  - b. An organization to assist Black Texans moving to the North.
  - c. An organization to punish Confederate rebels.
4. How do many people celebrate and honor Juneteenth today?
5. How is Opal Lee significant to the history of Juneteenth?
  - a. She was the first member of the Freedmen's Bureau to recognize Juneteenth as a holiday.
  - b. She established the first "Emancipation Parks" where Juneteenth celebrations were held.
  - c. She worked for decades to get Juneteenth recognized as a national holiday.